
THE

Distrest Mother.

A

TRAGEDY.

THE

Difficult Mother.

TRAGEDY.

THE

E. Harris

Distrest Mother.

A

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TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

in *Drury-Lane.*

BY

Her MAJESTY's Servants.

K. 133

Written by Mr. *PHILIPS.*

Racine

L O N D O N:

Printed for *S. Buckley* at the *Dolphin* in *Little-Britain*; and
J. Tonson, at *Shakespear's Head* over-against *Catherine-street*
in the *Strand.* MDCCXII.

THE

Director-General

A

AGENCY

ROYAL

THE

THE

THE

PHILIP S.

To Her GRACE

THE

Dutchess of *Montague*.

MADAM,

THIS Tragedy, which I do myself the Honour to dedicate to Your GRACE, is formed upon an Original, which passes for the most finished Piece in this kind of Writing that has ever been produced in the *French* Language. The principal Action and main Distress of the Play is of such a Nature, as seems more immediately to claim the Patronage of a
A 3 Lady:

DEDICATION.

Lady: And, when I consider the great and shining Characters of Antiquity that are celebrated in it, I am naturally directed to inscribe it to a Person, whose Illustrious Father has, by a long Series of glorious Actions, (for the Service of his Country and in Defence of the Liberties of *Europe*) not only surpassed the Generals of his own Time, but equalled the greatest Heroes of former Ages. The Name of *Hector* could not be more terrible to the *Greeks*, than that of the Duke of *Marlborough* has been to the *French*.

The refined Taste You are known to have in all Entertainments for the Diversion of the Publick, and the peculiar Life and Ornament Your Presence gives to all Assemblies, was no small Motive to determine me in the Choice of my Patroness. The Charms that shine out in the Person of Your GRACE, may convince every one that
there

DEDICATION

there is nothing unnatural in the Power which is ascribed to the Beauty of *Andromache*.

The strict Regard I have had to Decency and good Manners throughout this Work is the greatest Merit I pretend to plead in Favour of my Presumption; and is, I am sensible, the only Argument that can recommend it most effectually to Your Protection.

I am with the greatest Respect,

MADAM,

Your GRACE's most Humble,

and most Obedient Servant,

Ambr. Philips.

THE PREFACE.

IN all the Works of Genius and Invention, whether in Verse or Prose, there are in general but two Manners of Style; the one simple, natural and easy; the other swelling, forced, and unnatural. An injudicious Affectation of Sublimity is what has betrayed a great many Authors into the latter; not considering that real Greatness in Writing, as well as in Manners, consists in an unaffected Simplicity. The true Sublime does not lie in strained Metaphors and the Pomp of Words; but rises out of noble Sentiments and strong Images of Nature, which will always appear the more conspicuous, when the Language does not swell to hide and overshadow them.

These are the Considerations, that have induced me to write this Tragedy in a Style very different from what has been usually practised amongst us in Poems of this Nature. I have had the Advantage to Copy after a very great Master, whose Writings are deservedly admired in all Parts of *Europe*, and whose Excellencies are too well known to the Men of Letters in this Nation, to stand in need of any farther Discovery of them here. If I have been able to keep up to the Beauties of Monsieur de *Racine* in my Attempt, and to do him no Prejudice in the Liberties I have taken frequently to vary from so great a Poet, I shall have no Reason to be dissatisfied with the Labour it has cost me to bring the compleatest of his Works upon the *English* Stage.

I shall trouble my Reader no farther, than to give him some short Hints relating to this Play from the Preface of the *French* Author. The following Lines of *Virgil* mark out the Scene, the Action, and the four principal Actors in this Tragedy, together with their distinct Characters, excepting that of *Hermione*, whose Rage and Jealousie is sufficiently painted out in the *Andromache* of *Euripides*.

*Littoraque Epiri legimus, portuque subimus
Chaonio; & celsam Buthroti ascendimus Urbem—*

Sollemnes

The PREFACE.

*Sollemnes tum fortè dapes, & tristia dona
 Libabat cineri Andromache, Manesque vocabat
 Hectoreum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem,
 Et geminas, causam lachrymis, sacraverat Aras——
 Dejecit vultum, & demissà voce locuta est:
 O Felix una ante alias Priameia Virgo,
 Hostilem ad tumulum, Trojæ sub mœnibus altis
 Jussa mori! quæ sortitus non pertulit ullos,
 Nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile.
 Nos Patriâ incensâ, diversa per æquora vectæ,
 Stirpis Achilleæ fastus, Juvenemque superbum
 Servitio enixæ tulimus, qui deinde secutus
 Ledaam Hermionem, Lacedæmoniosque hymenæos——
 Ast illum ereptæ magno inflammatus amore
 Conjugis, & scelerum furis agitatus Orestes
 Excipit incautum patriasque obtruncat ad Aras.*

Virg. Æn. lib. 3.

The great Concern of *Andromache* in the Greek Poet, is for the Life of *Molossus*, a Son she had by *Pyrrhus*. But it is more conformable to the general Notion we form of that Princess, at this great Distance of Time, to represent her as the Disconsolate Widow of *Hector*, and to suppose her the Mother only of *Astyanax*. Considered in this Light, no doubt, she moves our Compassion much more effectually, than she could be imagined to do in any Distress for a Son by a Second Husband.

In Order to bring about this beautiful Incident, so necessary to heighten in *Andromache* the Character of a tender Mother, an affectionate Wife, and a Widow full of Veneration for the Memory of her deceased Husband; the Life of *Astyanax* is indeed a little prolonged beyond the Term fixed to it by the general Consent of the Ancient Authours. But so long as there is nothing improbable in the Supposition, a judicious Critick will always be pleased, when he finds a Matter of Fact (especially so far removed into the dark and fabulous Ages) falsified, for the Embellishment of a whole Poem.

PROLOGUE

Written by Mr. STEELE.

Spoken by Mr. WILKS.

SINCE Fancy of it self is loose and vain,
The wise by Rules, that airy Power restrain;
They think those Writers mad, who at their Ease
Convey this House and Audience where they please;
Who Nature's stated Distances confound,
And make this Spot all Soils the Sun goes round:
'Tis nothing, when a fancy'd Scene's in view,
To skip from Covent-Garden to Peru.

But Shakespear's self transgress'd; and shall each Elf,
Each Pigmy Genius, quote Great Shakespear's self!
What Critick dares prescribe what's just and fit,
Or mark out Limits for such boundless Wit!
Shakespear could travel thro' Earth, Sea and Air,
And paint out all the Powers and Wonders there.
In barren Desarts he makes Nature smile,
And gives us Feasts in his Enchanted Ile.

Our Author does his feeble Force confess,
Nor dares pretend such Merit to transgress;
Does not such shining Gifts of Genius share,
And therefore makes Propriety his Care.
Your Treat with study'd Decency he serves,
Not only Rules of Time and Place preserves,
But strives to keep his Characters intire,
With French Correctness and with British Fire.

PROLOGUE.

*This Piece presented in a Foreign Tongue,
When France was Glorious, and her Monarch young,
A hundred times a crowded Audience drew;
A hundred times repeated, still 'twas new.*

*Pyrrhus provok'd, to no wild Rants betray'd,
Resents his generous Love so ill repay'd;
Does like a Man resent, a Prince upbraid.
His Sentiments confess a Royal Mind,
Nor is he known a King from Guards behind.*

}

*Injur'd Hermione demands Relief;
But not from heavy Narratives of Grief:
In conscious Majesty her Pride is shewn;
Born to avenge her Wrongs, but not bemoan.*

*Andromache—If in our Author's Lines,
As in the great Original, she shines,
Nothing but from Barbarity she fears.
Attend with Silence; you'll applaud with Tears.*

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

- Pyrrhus*, The Son of *Achilles*, and King of *Epirus*, in Love with *Andromache*, but betroth'd to *Hermione*. } Mr. Booth.
- Phoenix*, Counsellor to *Pyrrhus*. } Mr. Bowman.
- Orestes*, the Son of *Agamemnon*, Ambassador from the *Greeks* to *Pyrrhus*, in Love with *Hermione*. } Mr. Powell.
- Pylades*, Friend to *Orestes*, separated from him in a Storm, driven on the Coasts of *Epirus*, and detain'd by contrary Winds in the Court of *Pyrrhus*. } Mr. Mills.

W O M E N.

- Andromache*, *Hector's* Widow, Captive to *Pyrrhus*, and Mother to *Ashtanax*. } Mrs. Oldfield.
- Cephisa*, Confidante to *Andromache*. } Mrs. Knight.
- Hermione*, Daughter to *Menelaus* and *Helen*, betrothed to *Pyrrhus*. } Mrs. Porter.
- Cleone*, Confidante to *Hermione*. } Mrs. Cox.

Attendants to *Pyrrhus* and *Orestes*, &c.

The SCENE a great Hall in the Court of *Pyrrhus*
at *Buthrotos*, the Capital City of *Epirus*.

T H E

Distrest Mother.

A C T I S C E N E I.

Enter Orestes and Pylades.

O R E S T E S.

O *Pylades!* What's Life without a Friend!
 At Sight of thee my gloomy Soul clears up;
 My Hopes revive, and Gladness dawns within me.
 After an Absence of six tedious Moons,

How could I hope to find my *Pylades*;
 My Joy, my Comfort! on this fatal Shore?
 Even in the Court of *Pyrrhus*? in these Realms,
 These hated Realms, so cross to all my Wishes.
 Oh, my brave Friend! may no blind Stroke of Fate
 Divide us more, and tear me from my self.

Pyl. O Prince! O, my *Orestes*! O, my Friend ———!
 Thus let me speak the Welcome of my Heart. [*Embracing.*]
 Since I have gain'd this unexpected Meeting,
 Blest be the Powers, who barr'd my Way to Greece,
 And kept me here! e'er since th' unhappy Day,

B

When

The Distrest Mother.

When warring Winds (*Epirus* full in View)
Sunder'd our Barks on the loud, stormy Main.

Orest. It was, indeed, a Morning full of Horror!

Pyl. A Thousand boading Cares have rack'd my Soul
In your behalf. Often, with Tears, I mourn'd
The fatal Ills, in which your Life's involv'd;
And grudg'd you Dangers, which I could not share.
I fear'd, to what Extreams the black Despair,
That prey'd upon your Mind, might have betray'd you;
And lest the Gods, in Pity to your Woes,
Should hear your Pray'rs, and take the Life you loath'd.
But now with Joy I see you! — The Retinue
And numerous Followers, that surround you here,
Speak better Fortunes, and a Mind dispos'd
To relish Life.

Orest. Alas! my Friend, who knows
The Destiny, to which I stand reserv'd!
I come in search of an inhuman Fair;
And live or dye, as she decrees my Fate.

Pyl. You much surprizeme, Prince! — I thought you cur'd
Of your unpity'd, unsuccessful Passion.
Why, in *Epirus*, shou'd you hope to find
Hermione less cruel, than at *Sparta*?
I thought her Pride, and the disdainful manner,
In which she treated all your constant Suff'rings,
Had broke your Fetters, and assur'd your Freedom:
Asham'd of your Repulse, and slighted Vows,
You hated her; you talk'd of her no more.
Prince you deceiv'd me.

Orest. I deceiv'd my self.
Do not upbraid the Unhappy Man, that loves thee.
Thou know'st, I never hid my Passion from thee:
Thou saw'st it in its Birth, and in its Progress.
And when at last the hoary King, her Father,
Great *Menelaus*, gave away his Daughter,
His lovely Daughter, to this happy *Pyrrhus*,
The Avenger of his Wrongs; thou saw'st my Grief,

My

The Distrest Mother.

3

My Torture, my Despair; and how I dragg'd,
From Sea to Sea, a heavy Chain of Woes.

O, *Pylades*! my Heart has bled within me,
To see thee, prest with Sorrows not thy own,
Still wandering with me, like a banish'd Man;
Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched Friend,
To temper the wild Transports of my Mind,
And save me from my self.

Pyl. Why thus unkind?

Why will you envy me the pleasing Tasks
Of generous Love and sympathizing Friendship?

Orest. Thou Miracle of Truth! — But hear me on.
When, in the midst of my disastrous Fate,
I thought, how the Divine *Hermione*,
Deaf to my Vows, regardless of my Complaints,
Gave up her self, in all her Charms, to *Pyrhus*;
Thou may'st remember, I abhor'd her Name,
Strove to forget her, and repay her Scorn.
I made my Friends, and even my self, believe
My Soul was freed. Alas! I did not see,
That all the Malice of my Heart was Love.
Triumphing thus, and yet a Captive still,
In Greece I landed: And in Greece I found
The assembled Princes all alarm'd with Fears,
In which their common Safety seem'd concern'd.
I join'd them: For I hoped that War and Glory
Might fill my Mind, and take up all my Thoughts;
And, that my shatter'd Soul, impair'd with Grief,
Once more would reassume its wanted Vigour,
And ev'ry idle Passion quit my Breast.

Pyl. The Thought was worthy *Agamemnon's* Son.

Orest. But see the strange Perverseness of my Stars,
Which throws me on the Rock I strove to shun!
The jealous Chiefs, and all the States of Greece,
With one united Voice, complain of *Pyrhus*;
That now, forgetful of the Promise given,
And mindless of his Godlike Father's Fate,

Astyanax he nurses in his Court;
Astyanax, the Young, surviving Hope
 Of ruin'd *Troy*; *Astyanax*, descended
 From a long Race of Kings; great *Hector's* Son.

Pyl. A Name still dreadful in the Ears of *Greece*!
 But, Prince, you'll cease to wonder, why the Child
 Lives thus protected in the Court of *Pyrrhus*,
 When you shall hear, the bright *Andromache*,
 His lovely Captive, charms him from his Purpose:
 The Mother's Beauty guards the helpless Son.

Orest. Your Tale confirms what I have heard; and hence
 Springs all my Hopes. Since my proud Rival woe
 Another Partner to his Throne and Bed,
Hermione may still be mine. Her Father,
 The injur'd *Menelaus*, thinks already
 His Daughter slighted, and the intended Nuptials
 Too long delay'd. I heard his loud Complaints
 With secret Pleasure; and was glad to find
 The ungrateful Maid neglected in her Turn,
 And all my Wrongs avenged in her Disgrace.

Pyl. Oh, may you keep your just Resentments warm!

Orest. Resentments? Ah, my Friend, too soon I found
 They grew not out of Hatred! I am betray'd:
 I practise on my self; and fondly plot
 My own Undoing. Goaded on by Love,
 I canvass'd all the Suffrages of *Greece*,
 And here I come, their sworn Ambassador,
 To speak their Jealousies, and claim this Boy.

Pyl. *Pyrrhus* will treat your Embassy with Scorn.
 Full of *Achilles*, his redoubted Sire,
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce;
 Made up of Passions: Will he then be sway'd,
 And give to Death the Son of her he loves?

Orest. Oh, would he render up *Hermione*,
 And keep *Astyanax*, I should be blest!
 He must; he shall: *Hermione* is my Life,
 My Soul, my Rapture! ——— I'll no longer curb

The Distrest Mother.

5

The strong Desire, that hurries me to Madness:
I'll give a Loose to Love, I'll bear her hence,
I'll tear her from his Arms; I'll—O, ye Gods!
Give me *Hermione*, or let me die!——
But, tell me, *Pylades*, how stand my Hopes?
Is *Pyrrhus* still enamour'd with her Charms?
Or dost thou think, he'll yield me up the Prize,
The dear, dear Prize, which he has ravish'd from me!

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond Hopes so far.
The King, indeed, cold to the *Spartan* Princess,
Turns all his Passion to *Andromache*,
Hector's afflicted Widow. But in vain,
With inter-woven Love and Rage, he sues
The charming Captive, obstinately cruel.
Oft he alarms her for her Child, confin'd
Apart; and, when her Tears begin to flow,
As soon he stops them, and recalls his Threats.

Hermione a thousand times has seen
His ill-requited Vows return to her;
And takes his Indignation all for Love.
What can be gather'd from a Man so various?
He may, in the Disorder of his Soul,
Love her, he hates; and punish her, he loves.

Orest. But, tell me, how the wrong'd *Hermione*
Brooks her slow Nuptials, and dishonour'd Charms?

Pyl. *Hermione* would fain be thought to scorn
Her wavering Lover, and disdain his Falseness;
But, spite of all her Pride, and conscious Beauty,
She mourns in Secret her neglected Charms,
And oft has made me privy to her Tears:
Still threatens to be gone; yet still she stays,
And sometimes sighs, and wishes for *Orestes*.

Orest. Ah, were those Wishes from her Heart, my Friend,
I'd fly in Transport—— [Flourish within.]

Pyl. Hear!—The King approaches
To give you Audience. Speak your Embassy

Without

Without Reserve: Urge the Demands of Greece;
 And in the Name of all her Kings require,
 That *Hector's* Son be given into your Hands.
Pyrrhus, instead of granting what they ask,
 To speed his Love, and win the *Trojan* Dame,
 Will make it Merit to preserve her Son.
 But, see, he comes!

Orest. Mean while, my *Pylades*,
 Go, and dispose *Hermione* to see
 Her Lover, who is come thus far, to throw
 Himself in all his Sorrows at her Feet.

S C E N E II.

Orestes, Pyrrhus, and Phœnix.

Orest. Before I speak the Message of the Greeks,
 Permit me, Sir, to glory in the Title
 Of their Ambassador, since I behold
Troy's Vanquisher, and Great *Achilles* Son.
 Nor does the Son rise short of such a Father:
 If *Hector* fell by him, *Troy* fell by you.
 But, what your Father never would have done,
 You do, You cherish the Remains of *Troy*;
 And, by an ill-timed Pity, keep alive
 The dying Embers of a Ten-years War.
 Have you so soon forgot the mighty *Hector*?
 The *Greeks* remember his high-brandish'd Sword,
 That fill'd their States with Widows and with Orphans;
 For which they call for Vengeance on his Son.
 Who knows what he may one Day prove? Who knows
 But he may brave us in our Ports, and, fill'd
 With *Hector's* Fury, set our Fleets on blaze?
 You may, your self, live to repent your Mercy.
 Comply, then, with the *Grecians* just Demands;
 Satisfy their Vengeance, and preserve your self.

The Distress'd Mother.

7

Pyr. The *Greeks* are for my Safety more concern'd
Than I desire. I thought your Kings were met
On more Important Councils. When I heard
The Name of their Ambassador, I hoped
Some glorious Enterprize was taking Birth.
Is *Agamemnon's* Son dispatch'd for this?
And do the *Grecian* Chiefs, renown'd in War,
A Race of Heroes, join in close Debate,
To plot an Infant's Death?—What Right has *Greece*
To ask his Life? Must I, must I alone,
Of all her scepter'd Warriors, be deny'd
To treat my Captive as I please? Know, Prince,
When *Troy* lay smoking on the Ground, and each
Proud Victor shared the Harvest of the War,
Andromache and this her Son were mine;
Were mine by Lot: And who shall wrest them from me?
Ulysses bore away old *Priam's* Queen;
Cassandra was your own great Father's Prize:
Did I concern my self in what they won?
Did I send Embassies to claim their Captives?

Orest. But, Sir, we fear, for you and for our selves,
Troy may again revive, and a new *Hector*
Rise in *Astyanax*. Then think betimes——

Pyr. Let daftard Souls be timorously wise:
But tell them, *Pyrrhus* knows not how to form
Far-fancy'd Ills, and Dangers out of sight.

Orest. Sir, call to mind the unrivall'd Strength of *Troy*,
Her Walls, her Bulwarks, and her Gates of Brass;
Her Kings, her Heroes, and embattel'd Armies!

Pyr. I call them all to mind; and see them all
Confus'd in Dust, all mixt in one wide Ruin;
All but a Child, and he in Bondage held.
What Vengeance can we fear from such a *Troy*?
If they have sworn to extinguish *Hector's* Race,
Why was their Vow for twelve long Months deferr'd?
Why was he not in *Priam's* Bosom slain?
He should have fallen among the slaughter'd Heaps,
Whelm'd

Whelm'd under *Troy*. His Death had then been just,
 When Age and Infancy, alike in vain,
 Plead'd their Weakness; when the heat of Conquest,
 And Horrors of the Night, rous'd all our Rage,
 And blindly hurry'd us through Scenes of Death.
 My Fury then was without Bounds: But now,
 My Wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still?
 And, deaf to all the tender Calls of Pity,
 Like a cool Murderer, bath my Hands in Blood?
 An Infant's Blood?—No, Prince—Go, bid the *Greeks*
 Mark out some other Victim; my Revenge
 Has had its Fill. What has escaped from *Troy*
 Shall not be saved to perish in *Epirus*.

Orest. I need not tell you, Sir, *Astyanax*
 Was doom'd to Death in *Troy*; nor how
 The crafty Mother saved her darling Son.
 The *Greeks* do now but urge their former Sentence:
 Nor is't the Boy, but *Hector* they pursue;
 The Father draws their Vengeance on the Son:
 The Father, who so oft in *Grecian* Blood
 Has drench'd his Sword: The Father, whom the *Greeks*
 May seek even here.—Prevent them, Sir, in time.

Pyr. No! Let them come, since I was born to wage
 Eternal Wars. Let them now turn their Arms
 On him, who conquer'd for them: Let them come,
 And in *Epirus* seek another *Troy*.

'Twas thus they recompens'd my God-like Sire;
 Thus was *Achilles* thank'd: But, Prince, remember,
 Their black Ingratitude then cost them dear.

Orest. Shall *Greece* then find a Rebel Son in *Pyrrhus*?

Pyr. Have I then conquer'd to depend on *Greece*?

Orest. *Hermione* will sway your Soul to Peace,
 And mediate 'twixt her Father and your self:
 Her Beauty will enforce my Embassie.

Pyr. *Hermione* may have her Charms; and I
 May love her still, tho' not her Father's Slave.
 I may in-time give Proofs, that I am a Lover;

The Distrest Mother.

9

But never must forget, that I am a King.
Mean while, Sir, you may see fair *Helen's* Daughter:
I know how near in Blood you stand ally'd.
That done, you have my Answer, Prince. The *Greeks*
No doubt expect your quick Return.

SCENE III.

Pyrrhus and Phoenix.

Phæn. Sir, do you send your Rival to the Princess?

Pyr. I am told, that he has lov'd her long.

Phæn. If so,

Have you not cause to fear the smother'd Flame
May kindle at her Sight, and blaze anew?
And she be wrought to listen to his Passion?

Pyr. Ah, let them, *Phænix*; let them love their Fill!
Let them go hence; let them depart together;
Together let them sail for *Sparta*: All my Ports
Are open to them both. From what Constraint,
What irksome Thoughts should I be then reliev'd!

Phæn. But, Sir——

Pyr. I shall another time, good *Phænix*,
Unbosom to thee all my Thoughts.—For, see,
Andromache appears.

SCENE IV.

Pyrrhus, Andromache and Cephisa.

Pyr. May I, Madam,
Flatter my Hopes so far, as to believe
You come to seek me here?

Andr. This way, Sir, leads
To those Apartments, where you guard my Son.
Since you permit me, once a Day, to visit
All I have left of *Hector*, and of *Troy*;
I go to weep a few sad Moments with him.
I have not yet, to Day, embraced my Child;
I have not held him in my widow'd Arms.

C

Pyr.

The Distrest Mother.

Pyr. Ah, Madam! should the Threats of *Greece* prevail,
You'll have Occasion for your Tears, indeed!

Andr. Alas! what Threats? What can alarm the *Greeks*?
There are no *Trojans* left!

Pyr. Their Hate to *Hector*
Can never die: The Terrour of his Name
Still shakes their Souls; and makes them dread his Son.

Andr. A mighty Honour for victorious *Greece*
To fear an Infant; a poor, friendless Child!
Who smiles in Bondage; nor yet knows himself
The Son of *Hector*, and the Slave of *Pyrrhus*.

Pyr. Weak as he is, the *Greeks* demand his Life;
And send no less than *Agamemnon's* Son,
To fetch him hence.

Andr. And, Sir, do you comply
With such Demands!—This Blow is aim'd at me:
How should the Child avenge his slaughter'd Sire?
But, cruel Men! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy Heart, and ease my Bonds.
I promis'd to my self in him a Son,
In him a Friend, a Husband, and a Father.
But I must suffer Sorrow heap'd on Sorrow;
And still the fatal Stroke must come from you.

Pyr. Dry up those Tears: I must not see you weep:
And know, I have rejected their Demands.
The *Greeks* already threaten me with War:
But, should they arm, as once they did for *Helen*,
And hide the *Adriatick* with their Fleets;
Should they prepare a second ten Years Siege,
And lay my Towers and Palaces in Dust:
I am determin'd to defend your Son;
And rather die my self, than give him up:
But, Madam, in the midst of all these Dangers,
Will you refuse me a propitious Smile?
Hated of *Greece*, and prest on every side,
Let me not, Madam, while I fight your Cause,
Let me not combat with your Cruelties;
And count *Andromache* amongst my Foes.

Andr.

The Distrest Mother.

II

Andr. Consider, Sir, how this will sound in *Greece* !
How can so great a Soul betray such Weakness?
Let not Men say, so generous a Design
Was but the Transport of a Heart in Love.

Pyr. Your Charms will justify me to the World.

Andr. How can *Ardromache*, a Captive Queen,
O'er-whelm'd with Grief, a Burden to her self,
Harbour a Thought of Love? Alas! what Charms
Have these unhappy Eyes, by you condemn'd
To weep for ever?—Talk of it no more.—

To reverence the Misfortunes of a Foe;
To succour the Distrest; to give the Son
To an afflicted Mother; to repel
Confederate Nations, leagu'd against his Life;
Unbribed by Love, untterrify'd by Threats,
To pity, to protect him: These are Cares,
These are Exploits worthy *Achilles'* Son.

Pyr. Will your Resentments, then, endure for ever?
Must *Pyrrhus* never be forgiven?—'Tis true,
My Sword has often reek'd in *Phrygian* Blood,
And carry'd Havock through your Royal Kindred:
But you, fair Princess, amply have avenged
Old *Priam's* vanquish'd House: And all the Woes,
I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
We both have suffer'd in our Turns: And now
Our common Foes should teach us to unite.

Andr. Where does the Captive not behold a Foe?

Pyr. Forget that Term of Hatred; and behold
A Friend in *Pyrrhus*! Give me but to hope,
I'll free your Son; I'll be a Father to him:
My self will teach him to avenge the *Trojans*.
I'll go in Person to chastise the *Greeks*,
Both for your Wrongs and mine. Inspired by you,
What would I not atchieve? Again shall *Troy*
Rise from its Ashes: This right Arm shall fix
Her Seat of Empire; and your Son shall reign.

C 2

Andr.

Andr. Such Deams of Greatness suit not my Condition:
 His Hopes of Empire perish'd with his Father.
 No; thou imperial City, ancient *Troy*,
 Thou Pride of *Asia*, founded by the Gods,
 Never, oh never! must we hope to see -
 Those Bulwarks rise, which *Hector* could not guard! —
 Sir, all I wish for, is some quiet Exile;
 Where far from *Greece* remov'd, and far from you,
 I may conceal my Son, and mourn my Husband.
 Your Love creates me Envy. Oh, return!
 Return to your betroth'd *Hermione*.

Pyr. Why do you mock me thus? you know, I cannot.
 You know my Heart is yours: My Soul hangs on you:
 You take up every Wish: My waking Thoughts,
 And nightly Dreams are all employ'd on you.
 'Tis true, *Hermione* was sent to share
 My Throne and Bed; and would with Transport hear
 The Vows, which you neglect.

Andr. She has no *Troy*,
 No *Hector* to lament: She has not lost
 A Husband by your Conquests: Such a Husband!
 (Tormenting Thought!) whose Death alone has made
 Your Sire immortal: *Pyrrhus* and *Achilles*
 Are both grown great by my Calamities.

Pyr. Madam, 'tis well! 'Tis very well! I find,
 Your Will must be obey'd: Imperious Captive,
 It shall. Henceforth I blot you from my Mind:
 You teach me to forget your Charms; to hate you.
 For, know, inhuman Beauty, I have loved
 Too well to treat you with Indifference.
 Think well upon it: My disorder'd Soul
 Wavers between th'Extremes of Love and Rage.
 I've been too tame! I will awake to Vengeance!
 The Son shall answer for the Mother's Scorn.
 The *Greeks* demand him: Nor will I endanger
 My Realms, to pleasure an ungrateful Woman.

Andr. Then he must die! alas, my Son must die!
He has no Friend, no Succour left, besides
His Mother's Tears, and his own Innocence!

Pyr. Go, Madam; visit this unhappy Son.
The Sight of him may bend your stubborn Heart,
And turn to Softness your unjust Disdain.
I shall once more expect your Answer. Go;
And think, while you embrace the Captive Boy,
Think, that his Life depends on your Resolves.

S C E N E V.

Andromache and Cephisa.

Andr. I'll go; and, in the Anguish of my Heart,
Weep o'er my Child—— If he must dye, my Life
Is wrapt in his; I shall not long survive.
Tis for his sake, that I have suffer'd Life;
Groan'd in Captivity; and out-liv'd *Hector*.
Yes, my *Astyanax*; we'll go together!
Together to the Realms of Night we'll go!
There to thy ravish'd Eyes thy Sire I'll show,
And point him out among the Shades below.

3

A C T

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Hermione and Cleone.

Her. **W**ELL, I'll be rul'd, *Cleone*: I will see him;
 I have told *Pylades*, that he may bring him.
 But, trust me, were I left to my own Thoughts,
 I should forbid him yet.

Cle. And why forbid him?
 Is he not, Madam, still the same *Orestes*?
Orestes, whose Return you oft have wish'd?
 The Man, whose Sufferings you so oft lamented,
 And often prais'd his Constancy and Love?

Her. That Love, that Constancy, so ill requited,
 Upbraids me to my self: I blush to think,
 How I have us'd him; and would shun his Presence.
 What will be my Confusion, when he sees me
 Neglected, and forsaken, like himself?
 Will he not say, Is this the scornful Maid,
 The proud *Hermione*, that tyranniz'd
 In *Sparta's* Court? And triumph'd in her Charms?
 Her Insolence at last is well repaid.
 I cannot bear the Thought.

Cle. You wrong your self
 With unbecoming Fears. He knows too well
 Your Beauty and your Worth. Your Lover comes not
 To offer Insults; but repeat his Vows,
 And breath his ardent Passion at your Feet.
 But, Madam, what's your Royal Father's Will?
 What Orders do your Letters bring from *Sparta*?

Her. His Orders are, if *Pyrrhus* still delay
 The Nuptials, and refuse to Sacrifice

The Distrest Mother.

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his *Trojan* Boy; I should with speed embark,
and with their Embassy return to *Greece*.

Cle. What would you more? *Orestes* comes in time
to save your Honour. *Pyrrhus* cools apace:
revent his Falshood; and forsake him first.
know you hate him: You have told me so.

Her. Hate him? My injur'd Honour bids me hate him:
the ungrateful Man! to whom I fondly gave
my Virgin Heart; the Man I loved so dearly;
the Man, I doated on! Oh, my *Cleone*!
how is it possible I should not hate him?

Cle. Then give him over, Madam. Quit his Court;
and with *Orestes*——

Her. No! I must have time
to work up all my Rage! To meditate
Parting, full of Horrour! My Revenge
will be but too much quicken'd by the Traitour.

Cle. Do you then wait new Insults? New Affronts?
to draw you from your Father! Then to leave you!
his own Court to leave you,——for a Captive!

Pyrrhus can provoke you, he has done it.

Her. Why dost thou heighten my Distress? I fear
to search out my own Thoughts, and sound my Heart.
I am blind to what thou seest: Believe me cured:
to utter my Weakness; tell me I have conquer'd:
I think, that my injur'd Soul is set against him;
and do thy best to make me think so too.

Cleo. Why would you loiter here, then?

Her. Let us fly!

Let us be gone! I leave him to his Captive:

Let him go kneel and supplicate his Slave.

Let us be gone!——But, what if he repent?

What, if the perjur'd Prince again submit,

and sue for Pardon? What, if he renew

his former Vows?——But, oh the faithless Man!

He flights me! drives me to Extreame!——However,

stay, *Cleone*, to perplex their Loves:

I'll stay, till, by an open Breach of Contract,
I make him hateful to the *Greeks*. Already
Their Vengeance have I drawn upon the Son:
Their second Embassy shall claim the Mother:
I will redouble all my Griefs upon her!

Cle. Ah, Madam, whither does your Rage transport you?
Andromache, alas, is Innocent!

A Woman plung'd in Sorrow, dead to Love:
And, when she thinks of *Pyrrhus*, 'tis with Horrour.

Her. Would I had done so too! — He had not, then,
Betray'd my easie Faith. — But I, alas!
Discover'd all the Fondness of my Soul;
I made no Secret of my Passion to him:
Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere.

My Eyes, my Tongue, my Actions spoke my Heart.

Cle. Well might you speak, without Reserve, to one
Engag'd to you by solemn Oaths and Treaties.

Her. His Ardour too was an Excuse to mine:
With other Eyes he saw me then! — *Cleone*,
Thou may'st remember, every thing conspired
To favour him: My Father's Wrongs avenged;
The *Greeks* triumphant; Fleets of *Trojan* Spoils;
His mighty Sire's, his own Immortal Fame;
His eager Love; — All, all conspired against me!
— But I have done: — I'll think no more of *Pyrrhus*.
Orestes wants not Merit: And he loves me.
My Gratitude, my Honour, both plead for him:
And, if I've Power o'er my own Heart, 'tis his.

Cle. Madam, he comes —

Her. Alas! I did not think
He was so near! — I wish I might not see him!

The Distrest Mother.

17

S C E N E II.

Hermione, Cleone, and Orestes.

Her. How am I to interpret, Sir, this Visit?
Is it a Compliment of Form, or Love?

Orest. Madam, you know my Weakness. 'Tis my Fate
To Love, unpity'd: To desire to see you,
And still to swear each time shall be the last.
My Passion breaks through my repeated Oaths;
And every time I visit you, I am perjur'd.
Even now, I find my Wounds all bleed afresh:
I blush to own it; but I know no Cure.
I call the Gods to Witness, I have try'd
Whatever Man could do, (but try'd in vain)
To wear you from my Mind. Through stormy Seas,
And savage Climes, in a whole Year of Absence,
I courted Dangers, and I long'd for Death,

Her. Why will you, Prince, indulge this mournful Tale?
It ill becomes the Ambassadour of *Greece*
To talk of Dying, and of Love. Remember
The Kings you represent: Shall their Revenge
Be disappointed by your ill-timed Passion?
Discharge your Embassy: 'Tis not *Orestes*
The *Greeks* desire should dye.

Orest. My Embassy

is at an End: For *Pyrrhus* has refused
To give up *Hector's* Son. Some hidden Power
Protects the Boy.

Her. Faithless, ungrateful Man!

[*Aside.*

Orest. I now prepare for *Greece*. But, ere I go,
Would hear my final Doom pronounc'd by you.
What do I say?—I do already hear it!

My Doom is fixt: I read it in your Eyes.

Her. Will you then still despair? Be still suspicious?
What have I done? Wherein have I been cruel?

D

'Tis

'Tis true, you find me in the Court of *Pyrrhus*:
 But, 'twas my Royal Father sent me hither.
 And who can tell, but I have shared your Griefs?
 Have I ne'er wept in secret? Never wish'd
 To see *Orestes*?——

Orest. Wish'd to see *Orestes*?——
 Oh Joy! Oh Extasie! My Soul's intranced!
 Oh charming Princess! Oh transcendent Maid!
 My utmost Wish!—— Thus, thus let me express
 My boundless Thanks!—— I never was unhappy.——
 Am I *Orestes*?——

Her. You are *Orestes*:
 The same unalter'd, generous, faithful Lover;
 The Prince, whom I esteem, whom I lament;
 And whom I fain would teach my Heart to love!

Orest. Ay, there it is!—— I have but your Esteem;
 While *Pyrrhus* has your Heart!——

Her. Believe me, Prince,
 Were you as *Pyrrhus*, I should hate you!——

Orest. No!——
 I should be blest! I should be lov'd as he is!——
 Yet all this while I dye by your Disdain;
 While he neglects your Charms, and courts another.

Her. And who has told you, Prince, that I am neglected?
 Has *Pyrrhus* said —— (Oh, I shall grow distracted!)
 Has *Pyrrhus* told you so?—— Or is it you,
 Who think thus meanly of me?—— Sir, perhaps,
 All do not judge like you.——

Orest. Madam, go on!
 Insult me still: I am us'd to bear your Scorn.

Her. Why am I told how *Pyrrhus* loves or hates?
 —— Go, Prince, and arm the *Greeks* against the Rebels:
 Let them lay waste his Country; raze his Towns;
 Destroy his Fleets; his Palaces; —— Himself!——
 Go, Prince; and tell me then how much I love him.

Orest. To hasten his Destruction, come your self;
 And work your Royal Father to his Ruin.

The Distrest Mother.

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Her. Mean while he weds *Andromache*!

Orest. Ah, Princess!

What is't I hear?

Her. What Infamy for Greece,

If he shou'd wed a *Phrygian*, and a Captive!

Orest. Is this your Hatred, Madam? — 'Tis in vain
You hide your Passion; every Thing betrays it:
Your Looks, your Speech, your Anger, nay your Silence;
Your Love appears in All; your secret Flame
Breaks out the more, the more you would conceal it.

Her. Your Jealousie perverts my Meaning still,
And wrests each Circumstance to your Disquiet:
My very Hate is construed into Fondness.

Orest. Impute my Fears, if groundless, to my Love.

Her. Then hear me, Prince. Obedience to a Father
First brought me hither; and the same Obedience
Detains me here, 'till *Pyrrhus* drive me hence;
Or my offended Father shall recall me.
Tell this proud King, that *Menelaus* scorns
To match his Daughter with a Foe of Greece:
Bid him resign *Astyanax*, or me.
If he persists to guard the hostile Boy,
Hermione embarks with you for *Sparta*.

SCENE III.

Orestes, alone.

Then is *Orestes* blest! My Griefs are fled!
Fled like a Dream! — Methinks I tread in Air!
Pyrrhus, enamour'd of his Captive Queen,
Will thank me, if I take her Rival hence:
He looks not on the Princess with my Eyes!
Surprising Happiness! unlook'd-for Joy!
Never let Love despair! — The Prize is mine!
Be smooth, ye Seas; and, ye propitious Winds,
Breathe from *Epirus* to the *Spartan Coasts*!

The Distrest Mother.

I long to view the Sails unfurl'd — But, see!
Pyrrhus approaches in a happy Hour.

S C E N E IV.

Orestes, Pyrrhus and Phoenix.

Pyr. I was in Pain to find you, Prince. My warm,
 Ungovern'd Temper would not let me weigh
 The Importance of your Embassy; and hear
 You argue for my Good. — I was to blame.
 I since have poised your Reasons: And I thank
 My good Allies: Their Care deserves my Thanks.
 You have convinc'd me, that the Weal of *Greece*,
 My Father's Honour, and my own Repose
 Demand, that *Hector's* Race should be destroy'd.
 I shall deliver up *Astyanax*;
 And you, your self, shall bear the Victim hence.

Orest. If you approve it, Sir, and are content
 To spill the Blood of a defenceless Child;
 The offended *Greeks*, no doubt, will be pleas'd.

Pyr. Closer to strain the Knot of our Alliance,
 I have determin'd to espouse *Hermione*.

You come in time to grace our Nuptial Rites:
 In you the Kings of *Greece* will all be present;
 And you have Right to personate her Father,
 As his Ambassadour and Brother's Son.

Go, Prince, renew your Visit; tell *Hermione*,
 To-Morrow I receive her from your Hands.

Orest. [*aside.*] O Change of Fortune! Oh undone *Orestes*!

S C E N E V.

Pyrrhus and Phoenix.

Pyr. Well, *Phoenix*! Am I still a Slave to Love?
 What thinkest thou now? Am I my self again?

Phœ.

The Distrest Mother.

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Phæn. Sir, This is something; this discovers *Pyrrhus* ;
shows all the Hero : Now you are your self !
The Son ! the Rival of the great *Achilles* !

Greece will applaud you ; and the World confefs,
Pyrrhus has conquer'd *Troy* a second Time !

Pyr. Nay, *Phænix*, now I but begin to triumph :
never was a Conquerour 'till now !

believe me, a whole Host, a War of Foes
may sooner be subdued, than Love. O, *Phænix* !

What Ruin have I shunn'd ? The *Greeks*, enraged,
hung o'er me, like a gathering Storm ; and soon
burst in Thunder on my Head ; while I
abandon'd Duty, Empire, Honour, All,
to please a thankless Woman ! — One kind Look
had quite undone me !

Phæn. O, my Royal Master !

The Gods, in Favour to you, made her cruel.

Pyr. Thou sawest with how much Scorn she treated me !

When I permitted her to see her Son,

I hop'd it might have work'd her to my Wishes.

I went to see the mournful Interview,

and found her bathed in Tears, and lost in Passion.

And with Distress, a Thousand Times she call'd

Hector's Name : And when I spoke in Comfort,

I promis'd my Protection to her Son ;

I kiss'd the Boy ; and call'd again on *Hector* :

I strain'd him in her Arms ; and cry'd, 'Tis he !

He himself ! his Eyes, his every Feature !

Every Frown, and his stern Look already !

He ! 'Tis my loved Lord, whom I embrace ! —

Is she then think, that I preserve the Boy,

Tooth and keep alive her Flame for *Hector* ?

Phæn. No doubt, she does ; and thinks you favour'd in it.

Let her go, for an ungrateful Woman !

Pyr. I know the Thoughts of her proud, stubborn Heart :

Of her Charms, and insolent in Beauty,

It mocks my Rage ; and, when it threatens loudest,

Expects,

Expects, 'twill soon be humbled into Love.
 But we shall change our Parts: And she shall find,
 I can be deaf, like her; and steel my Heart!
 She is *Hector's* Widow; I *Achilles' Son*:
Pyrrhus is born to hate *Andromache*!

Phæn. My Royal Master, talk of her no more:
 I do not like this Anger. Your *Hermione*
 Should now engross your Thoughts. 'Tis time to see her:
 'Tis time, you should prepare the Nuptial Rites;
 And not relye upon a Rival's Care:
 It may be dangerous.

Pyr. But tell me, *Phænix*;
 Doeſt thou not think, the proud *Andromache*
 Will be enraged, when I shall wed the Princess?

Phæn. Why does *Andromache* still haunt your Thoughts?
 What is't to you, be she enraged or pleas'd?
 Let her Name perish: Think of her no more!

Pyr. No, *Phænix*!—I have been too gentle with her:
 I have check'd my Wrath, and stifled my Resentments:
 She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.
 Let us return:—I'll brave her to her Face:
 I'll give my Anger it's free Course against her.
 Thou shalt see, *Phænix*, how I'll break her Pride!

Phæn. Oh, go not, Sir!—There's Ruin in her Eyes!
 You do not know your Strength: You'll fall before her,
 Adore her Beauty, and revive her Scorn.

Pyr. That were indeed a most unmanly Weakness!
 Thou dost not know me, *Phænix*!

Phæn. Ah, my Prince!
 You still are struggling in the Toils of Love.

Pyr. Can'st thou then think, I love this Woman still?
 One who repays my Passion with Disdain!
 A Stranger, Captive, friendless and forlorn;
 She and her darling Son within my Power;
 His Life a Forfeit to the Greeks: Yet I
 Preserve her Son; would take her to my Throne;

Would fight her Battels, and avenge her Wrongs ;
and all this while she treats me as her Foe !

Phæn. You have it in your Power to be revenged.

Pyr. Yes;—and I'll shew my Power!—I'll give her Cause
to hate me! her *Astyanax* shall die!—

What Tears will then be shed? How will she then
in bitterness of Heart reproach my Name!

Then, to compleat her Woes, will I espouse
Termione:—I will stab her to the Heart!

Phæn. Alas, you threaten, like a Lover, still !

Pyr. *Phænix*, excuse this Struggle of my Soul :
'Tis the last Effort of expiring Love.

Phæn. Then hasten, Sir, to see the *Spartan* Princess;
and turn the Bent of your Desires on her.

Pyr. Oh, 'tis a heavy Task to conquer Love!
and wean the Soul from her accustom'd Fondness.

But, come:—A long Farewel to *Hector's* Widow.

'Tis with a secret Pleasure I look back,

and see the many Dangers I have pass'd.

The Merchant thus, in dreadful Tempests tost,
thrown by the Waves on some unlook'd-for Coast;

He turns, and sees, with a delighted Eye,

Midst Rocks and Shelves the broken Billows fly :

And, while the outrageous Winds the Deep deform,
He smiles on the Tumult, and enjoys the Storm.

A C T

ACT III. SCENE I.

Pylades and Orestes.

Pyl. **F**OR Heaven's sake, Sir, compose your ruffled Mind
And moderate your Rage!

Orest. No, *Pylades*!

This is no time for Counsel.—I am deaf.
Talk not of Reason! I have been too patient.
Life is not worth my Care. My Soul grows desperate.
I'll bear her off; or perish in the Attempt.

I'll force her from his Arms:——By Heaven, I will!

Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my Friend:——We'll force her hence.
But still consider we are in *Epirus*:

The Court, the Guards, *Hermione* her self,
The very Air we breath, belongs to *Pyrrhus*.

Good Gods! what tempted you to seek her here?

Orest. Lost to my self, I knew not what I did!
My Purposes were wild. Perhaps I came
To menace *Pyrrhus*, and upbraid this Woman.

Pyl. This Violence of Temper may prove fatal.

Orest. I must be more than Man to bear these Shocks.
These Outrages of Fate, with Temper!

He tells me, that he weds *Hermione*;
And will to-Morrow take her from my Hand!——
My Hand shall sooner tear the Tyrant's Heart——

Pyl. Your Passion blinds you, Sir:——He's not to blame.
Could you but look into the Soul of *Pyrrhus*,
Perhaps you'd find it tortur'd, like your own.

Orest. No, *Pylades*! 'Tis all Design.——His Pride
To triumph over me, has chang'd his Love.
The fair, the bright *Hermione*, before I came,
In all her Bloom of Beauty, was neglected.

Ah cruel Gods! I thought her all my own!
 She was consenting to return to *Sparta*:
 Her Heart, divided betwixt Rage and Love,
 Was on the Wing to take its Leave of *Pyrrhus*.
 She heard my Sighs; she pityed my Complaints;
 She praised my Constancy:—The least Indifference
 From this proud King, had made *Orestes* happy!

Pyl. So your fond Heart believes!—

Orest. Did I not see
 Her Hate, her Rage, her Indignation rise
 Against the ungrateful Man?

Pyl. Believe me, Prince,
 'Twas then she loved him most! Had *Pyrrhus* left her,
 She would have formed some new Pretext to stay.
 Take my Advice:—Think not to force her hence;
 But fly your self from her destructive Charms.
 Her Soul is linked to *Pyrrhus*: Were she yours,
 She would reproach you still, and still regret
 Her disappointed Nuptials.—

Orest. Talk no more!
 I cannot bear the Thought! She must be mine!
 Did *Pyrrhus* carry Thunder in his Hand,
 I'd stand the Bolt, and challenge all his Fury,
 Ere I resigned *Hermione*.—By Force
 I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my Ships!
 Have we forgot her Mother *Helen's* Rape?

Pyl. Will then *Orestes* turn a Ravisher;
 And blot his Embassy?

Orest. O, *Pylades*!

My Grief weighs heavy on me:—I will distract me!

O leave me to my self!—Let not thy Friendship
 Involve thee in my Woes. Too long already,
 Too long hast thou been punish'd for my Crimes.
 'Tis enough, my Friend!—It is enough!

Let not thy generous Love betray thee farther.
 The Gods have set me as their Mark, to empty
 Their Quivers on me.—Leave me to my self.

Mine be the Danger; mine the Enterprize.
 All I request of thee is, to return,
 And in my Place convey *Astyanax*
 (As *Pyrrhus* has consented) into *Greece*.
 Go, *Pylades*——

Pyl. Lead on, my Friend, lead on!
 Let us bear off *Hermione*! No Toil,
 No Danger can deter a Friend!——Lead on!
 Draw up the *Greeks*: Summon your numerous Train,
 The Ships are ready; and the Wind fits fair:
 There Eastward lies the Sea, the rolling Waves
 Break on those Palace-stairs. I know each Pass,
 Each Avenue and Out-let of the Court.
 This very Night we'll carry her on Board.

Orest. Thou art too good!—I trespass on thy Friendships
 But oh, excuse a Wretch, whom no Man pities,
 Except thy self, one just about to lose
 The Treasure of his Soul: Whom all Mankind
 Conspire to hate, and one, who hates himself.
 When will my Friendship be of use to thee?

Pyl. The Question is unkind.——But now remember
 To keep your Counsels close, and hide your Thoughts:
 Let not *Hermione* suspect——No more——
 I see her coming, Sir——

Orest. Away, my Friend:
 I am advised: my All depends upon it.

S C E N E II.

Orestes, Hermione, and Cleone.

Orest. Madam, your Orders are obey'd: I have seen
Pyrrhus, my Rival; and have gained him for you.
 The King resolves to wed you.

Her. So I am told,
 And farther, I am informed, that you, *Orestes*,
 Are to dispose me for the intended Marriage.

Orest.

Orest. And are you, Madam, willing to comply?

Her. Could I imagine *Pyrrhus* loved me still?

After so long Delays, who would have thought
His hidden Flames would shew themselves at last,
And kindle in his Breast, when mine expired?
I can suppose, with you, he fears the *Greeks*;
That it is Interest, and not Love, directs him;
And, that my Eyes had greater Power o'er you.

Orest. No, Princess, no! It is too plain he loves you:
Your Eyes do what they will, and cannot fail
To gain a Conquest, where you wish they should.

Her. What can I do, alas!—my Faith is promised:
Can I refuse, what is not mine to give?

A Princess is not at her Choice to love;
All we have left us is a blind Obedience:
And yet, you see, how far I had complied,
And made my Duty yield to your Intreaties.

Orest. Ah, cruel Maid! you knew—but I have done.
All have a Right to please themselves in Love:
I blame you not: 'Tis true I hop'd:—But you
Are Mistress of your Heart: And I am content.
'Tis Fortune is mine Enemy; not you.
But, Madam, I shall spare your farther Pain
On this uneasy Theme; and take my leave.

S C E N E III.

Hermione and Cleone.

Her. Cleone, could'st thou think he'd be so calm?

Cle. Madam, this silent Grief sits heavy on him.
He is to be pityed: His too eager Love
Has made him busie to his own Destruction.
His Threats have wrought this Change of Mind in *Pyrrhus*.

Her. Doe'st thou think *Pyrrhus* capable of Fear?
Whom should the intrepid *Pyrrhus* fear? The *Greeks*?
Did he not lead their harrassed Troops to Conquest,

When they despair'd, when they retir'd from Troy,
And sought for Shelter in their burning Fleets?

Did he not then supply his Father's Place?

No! my *Cleone*; he is above Constraint:

He Acts unforc'd; and where he weds, he loves.

Cle. Oh, that *Orestes* had remain'd in Greece!

I fear to-Morrow will prove Fatal to him.

Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing, but *Orestes*?

Pyrrhus is mine again! — Is mine for ever!

Oh my *Cleone*! I am wild with Joy! —

Pyrrhus, the Bold! the Brave! The Godlike *Pyrrhus*!

— Oh, I could tell thee numberless Exploits,

And tire thee with his Battels! — Oh, *Cleone* —

Cle. Madam, conceal your Joy. — I see *Andromache*:

She weeps, and comes to speak her Sorrows to you.

Her. I would mingle the Gladness of my Heart!

Let us retire: Her Grief is out of Season.

SCENE IV.

Andromache, Hermione, Cleone, and Cephalus.

And. Ah, Madam! whither, whither do you fly?
Where can your Eyes behold a Sight more pleasing,
Than *Hector's* Widow suppliant, and in Tears?

I come not an alarmed, a jealous Foe,

To envy you the Heart your Charms have won:

The only Man I sought to please, is gone;

Kild in my Sight, by an inhuman Hand.

Hector first taught me Love, which my fond Heart
Shall ever cherish, till we meet in Death.

But, Oh, I have a Son! — And you, one Day,

Will be no Stranger to a Mother's Fondness:

But Heaven forbid, that you should ever know

A Mother's Sorrow for an only Son,

Her Joy, her Bliss, her last surviving Comfort!

When every Hour she trembles for his Life!

Your Power o'er *Pyrrhus*, may relieve my Fears.

The Distress'd Mother.

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Alas! what Danger is there in a Child,
Sav'd from the Wreck of a whole ruined Empire?
Let me go hide him, in some Desert Isle:
You may rely upon my tender Care,
To keep him far from Perils of Ambition:
All, he can learn of me, will be to weep!

Her. Madam, 'tis easie to conceive your Grief:
But, it would ill become me, to sollicit
In Contradiction to my Father's Will:
Tis he, who urges to destroy your Son.
Madam, if *Pyrrhus* must be wrought to Pity,
No Woman does it better, than your self:
If you gain him, I shall comply of Course.

SCENE V.

Andromache, and Cephisa.

And. Did'st thou not mind, with what Disdain she spoke?
Youth and Prosperity have made her vain:
She has not seen the fickle Turns of Life.

Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her Counsel;
Pd speak my own Distress: One Look from you
Will vanquish *Pyrrhus*, and confound the *Greeks*——
See, where he comes!—— Lay hold on this Occasion.

SCENE VI.

Pyrrhus, Andromache, Phœnix and Cephisa.

Pyr. Where is the Princess?— Did you not inform me,
Hermione was here? [To *Phœnix*.

Phœn. I thought so, Sir.

And. Thon seest, what mighty Power my Eyes have on
him! [To *Cephisa*.

Pyr. What says she, *Phœnix*?

And. I have no Hope left!

Phœn.

Phæn. Let us be gone : — *Hermione* expects you.

Ceph. What do you, Madam? — Break this fullen Silence.

Andr. My Child's already promised ! —

Ceph. But not given.

Andr. No ! no ! — my Tears are vain ! His Doom is fixt !

Pyr. See, if she deigns to cast one Look upon us !
Proud Woman !

Andr. I provoke him by my Presence.
Let us retire.

Pyr. Come let us satisfy
The Greeks ; and give them up this *Phrygian* Boy.

Andr. Ah, Sir, recall those Words ! — What have you said !
If you give up my Son, Oh give up me ! —

You, who so many Times have sworn me Friendship ;
Oh Heavens ! — will you not look with Pity on me !
Is there no Hope ? Is there no Room for Pardon ?

Pyr. *Phænix* will answer you : — My Word is pass.

Andr. You, who would brave so many Dangers for me.

Pyr. I was your Lover then : I now am free.
To favour you, I might have spared his Life :
But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.
Now 'tis too late.

Andr. Ah, Sir, you underst d
My Tears, my Wishes, which I durst not utter,
Afraid of a Repulse. Oh, Sir, excuse
The Pride of Royal Blood, that checks my Soul,
And knows not how to be importunate.
You know, alas ! I was not born to kneel,
To sue for Pity, and to own a Master.

Pyr. No ! in your Heart you curse me ! you disdain
My generous Flame, and scorn to be obliged !
This very Son, this Darling of your Soul,
Would be less dear, did I preserve him for you.
Your Anger, your Aversion fall on me ;
You hate me more than the whole League of Greece :
But, I shall leave you to your great Resentments.
Let us go, *Phænix*, and appease the Greeks.

Andr.

The Distrest Mother.

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Andr. Then let me dye! And let me go to *Hector*!

Ceph. But, Madam —

Andr. What can I do more? The Tyrant
gives my Distraction, and insults my Tears! [*To Cephisa.*]

— Behold how low you have reduced a Queen!

These Eyes have seen my Country laid in Ashes;

My Kindred fall in War; my Father slain;

My Husband dragged in his own Blood; My Son

Condemned to Bondage, and my self a Slave.

Yet, in the midst of these unheard-of Woes,

'Twas some Relief to find my self your Captive;

And that my Son, derived from ancient Kings,

Since he must serve, had *Pyrrhus* for his Master.

When *Priam* kneeled, the great *Achilles* wept:

I hoped I should not find his Son less noble:

I thought the Brave were still the most compassionate.

Oh, do not, Sir, divide me from my Child! —

He must dye —

Pyr. *Phoenix*, withdraw a while.

S C E N E VII.

Pyrrhus and Andromache.

Pyr. Rise, Madam. — Yet you may preserve your Son.

Find, whenever I provoke your Tears,

I furnish you with Arms against my self.

I thought my Hatred fixt, before I saw you.

Oh, turn your Eyes upon me, while I speak!

And see, if you discover in my Looks

An angry Judge, or an obdurate Foe.

Why will you force me to desert your Cause?

For your Son's Name I beg we may be Friends:

Let me intreat you to secure his Life!

Must I turn Suppliant for him? Think, Oh think,

(*'Tis*

(Tis the last time) you both may yet be happy!
 I know the Ties I break; the Foes I arm:
 I wrong *Hermonie*; I send her hence;
 And with her Diadem I bind your Brows.
 Consider well; for, 'tis of Moment to you!
 Chuse to be wretched, Madam, or a Queen.
 My Soul, consumed with a whole Year's Despair,
 Can bear no longer these perplexing Doubts.
 Enough of Sighs, and Tears, and Threats I have try'd.
 I know, if I am deprived of you, I die:
 But, oh, I die, if I wait longer for you!
 I leave you to your Thoughts. When I return,
 We'll to the Temple: There you'll find your Son;
 And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever.

S C E N E VIII.

Andromache and Cephisa.

Ceph. I told you, Madam, that, in spite of Greece,
 You would o'er-rule the Malice of your Fortune.

Andr. Alas! *Cephisa*, what have I obtain'd!
 Only a poor, short Respite for my Son.

Ceph. You have enough approved your Faith to *Hector*:
 To be reluctant still would be a Crime.
 He would himself persuade you to comply.

And. How!—wouldst thou give me *Pyrrhus* for a Husband?

Ceph. Think you 'twill please the Ghost of your dead Husband
 That you should sacrifice his Son? Consider, [hand]
Pyrrhus once more invites you to a Throne;
 Turns all his Power against the Foes of *Troy*;
 Remembers not *Achilles* was his Father;
 Retracts his Conquests, and forgets his Hatred.

Andr. But how can I forget them! How can I
 Forget my *Hector*, treated with Dishonour;
 Deprived of Funeral Rites; and vilely dragged,

bloody Coarse, about the Walls of Troy?
 an I forget the good old King his Father,
 ain in my Presence; at the Altar slain!
 Which vainly for Protection he embraced.
 Hast thou forgot that dreadful Night, *Cephisa*,
 When a whole People fell! Methinks I see
Pyrrhus, enraged and breathing Vengeance, enter
 midst the Glare of burning Palaces:
 See him hew his Passage through my Brothers;
 and, bathed in Blood, lay all my Kindred waste.
 Think, in this Scene of Horrour, what I suffer'd!
 This is the Courtship I receiv'd from *Pyrrhus*;
 and this the Husband thou would'st give me!—No;
 We both will perish first! I'll ne'er consent.
Ceph. Since you resolve *Astyanax* shall dye,
 haste to the Temple: Bid your Son farewell.
 Why do you tremble, Madam?

Andr. Oh *Cephisa*!

thou hast awakened all the Mother in me.
 How can I bid Farewell to the dear Child,
 the Pledge, the Image of my much-loved Lord!
 Alas, I call to mind the fatal Day,
 when his too forward Courage led him forth
 to seek *Achilles*.

Ceph. Oh, the unhappy Hour!

was then *Troy* fell, and all her Gods forsook her.

Andr. That Morn, *Cephisa*! That ill-fated Morn!

My Husband bid thee bring *Astyanax*;
 He took him in his Arms; and, as I wept,
 My Wife, my Dear *Andromache*, said he,
 leaving with stifled Sighs to see me weep)
 That Fortune may attend my Arms, the Gods
 none can tell: To thee I give the Boy;
 preserve him as the Token of our Loves:
 If I should fall, let him not miss his Sire
 While thou survive'st, but by thy tender Care
 let the Son see, that thou didst love his Father.

F

Ceph.

Ceph. And will you throw away a Life so precious?
At once extirpate all the *Trojan* Line?

Andr. Inhuman King! What has he done to suffer?
If I neglect your Vows, is he to blame?
Has he reproach'd you with his slaughter'd Kindred?
Can he resent those Ills he does not know? —
But oh! While I deliberate he dies.

No, no, thou must not dye, while I can save thee:
Oh! let me find out *Pyrrhus* — Oh *Cephisa*!
Do thou go find him.

Ceph. What must I say to him?

Andr. Tell him I love my Son to such Excess —
But dost thou think he means the Child shall dye?
Can Love rejected turn to so much Rage?

Ceph. Madam, he'll soon be here — Resolve on something

Andr. Well then, assure him —

Ceph. Madam, of your Love?

Andr. Alas! thou know'st that is not in my Power.
Oh my dead Lord! Oh *Priam's* Royal House!
Oh my *Astyanax*! at what a Price
Thy Mother buys thee? Let us go.

Ceph. But whither?

And what does your unsettled Heart resolve?

Andr. Come my *Cephisa*, let us go together,
To the sad Monument which I have rais'd
To *Hector's* Shade; where in their sacred Urn
The Ashes of my Hero lye enclosed,
The dear Remains which I have saved from *Troy*;
There let me weep, there summon to my Aid,
With pious Rites, my *Hector's* awful Shade;
Let him be Witness to my Doubts, my Fears,
My agonizing Heart, my flowing Tears:
Oh! may he rise in Pity from his Tomb,
And fix his wretched Son's uncertain Doom.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Andromache, Cephisa.

Ceph. **B**Left be the Tomb of *Hector*, that inspires
These Thoughts: Or is it *Hector's* self,
That prompts you to preserve your Son? 'Tis he,
Who still presides o'er ruin'd *Troy*; 'tis he,
Who urges *Pyrhus* to restore *Astyanax*.

Andr. *Pyrhus* has said he will: And thou hast heard him
Just now renew the oft-repeated Promise.

Ceph. Already in the Transports of his Heart,
He gives you up his Kingdom, his Allies,
And thinks himself o'erpaid for all in you.

Andr. I think I may rely upon his Promise:
And yet my Heart is overcharged with Grief.

Ceph. Why should you grieve? You see he bids Defiance
To all the *Greeks*: And to protect your Son
Against their Rage, has placed his Guards about him;
Leaving himself defenceless for his sake:
But Madam, think the Coronation Poms
Will soon demand your Presence in the Temple:
'Tis Time you lay aside these Mourning Weeds.

Andr. I will be there; but first would see my Son.

Ceph. Madam, you need not now be anxious for him:
He will be always with you, all your own,
To lavish the whole Mother's Fondness on him.
What a Delight to train beneath your Eye
A Son, who grows no longer up in Bondage;
A Son in whom a Race of Kings revives?
But Madam, you are sad, and wrapt in Thought,
As if you relish'd not your Happiness.

Andr. Oh I must see my Son once more, *Cephisa*.

Ceph. Madam, he now will be no more a Captive;
Your Visits may be frequent as you please.
To morrow you may pass the live long day.—

Andr. To morrow! Oh *Cephisa*! — But no more!
Cephisa, I have always found thee faithful:
A Load of Care weighs down my drooping Heart.

Ceph. Oh! that 'twere possible for me to ease you.

Andr. I soon shall exercise thy long-try'd Faith! —
Mean while I do conjure thee, my *Cephisa*,
Thou take no Notice of my present Trouble;
And, when I shall disclose my secret Purpose,
That thou be punctual to perform my Will.

Ceph. Madam, I have no Will but yours. My Life
Is nothing, ballanced with my Love to you.

Andr. I thank thee, good *Cephisa*: my *Astyanax*
Will recompense thy Friendship to his Mother.
But, come: my Heart's at Ease: Assist me now
To change this sable Habit. — Yonder comes
Hermione: I would not meet her Rage.

SCENE II.

Hermione, Cleone.

Cle. This unexpected Silence, this Reserve,
This outward Calm, this settled Frame of Mind,
After such Wrongs and Insults, much surprize me!
You, who before could not command your Rage,
When *Pyrhus* look'd but kindly on his Captive;
How can you bear unmoved, that he should wed her,
And seat her on a Throne which you should fill?
I fear this dreadful Stillness in your Soul!
'Twere better, Madam —

Herm. Have you call'd *Orestes*?

Cle. Madam, I have. His Love is too impatient,
Not to obey with speed the welcome Summons.
His love-sick Heart o'er-looks his unkind Usage :
His Ardour's still the same.—Madam, he's here.

S C E N E III.

Orestes, Hermione, Cleone.

Orest. Ah Madam, is it true ? does then *Orestes*
length attend you by your own Commands ?
What can I do—

Herm. *Orestes*, do you love me ?

Orest. What means that Question, Princess ? do I love you ?
My Oaths, my Perjuries, my Hopes, my Fears,
My Farewel, my Return, all speak my Love.

Herm. Avenge my Wrongs, and I believe them all :

Orest. It shall be done—my Soul has catch'd the Alarm !

I'll spirit up the *Greeks*—I'll lead them on :

Our Cause shall animate our Fleets and Armies.

Let us return : let us not lose a Moment,

Let us urge the Fate of this devoted Land :

Let us depart.

Her. No Prince, let us stay here !

I will have Vengeance here—I will not carry

this load of Infamy to *Greece* : nor trust

the Chance of War to vindicate my Wrongs :

When I depart I'll make *Epirus* mourn ;

Let you avenge me, let it be this Instant ;

My rage brooks no Delay—haste to the Temple,

Slay the Prince, and sacrifice him :

Orest. Whom ?

Herm. Why *Pyrrhus*.

Orest. *Pyrrhus* ? did you say *Pyrrhus* ?

Herm. You demurr ?

fly, be gone ! give me not time to think !

Talk

Talk not of Laws—he tramples on all Laws—
Let me not hear him justify'd,——away.

Orest. You cannot think I'll justify my Rival.
Madam, your Love has made him criminal.
You shall have Vengeance ; I'll have Vengeance too :
But let our Hatred be profest and open ;
Let us alarm all Greece, denounce a War ;
Let us attack him in his Strength, and hunt him down
By Conquest : should I turn a base Assassin,
'Twould sully all the Kings I represent.

Herm. Have not I been dishonour'd ? set at nought ?
Expos'd to publick Scorn——and will you suffer
The Tyrant who dares use me thus, to live ?
Know Prince, I hate him more than once I loved him.
The Gods alone can tell how once I loved him :
Yes, the false perjur'd Man, I once did love him ;
And spight of all his Crimes and broken Vows,
If he should live I may relapse——who knows
But I to Morrow may forgive his Wrongs !

Orest. First let me tear him piecemeal—he shall dye.
But Madam, give me leisure to contrive
The Place, the Time, the Manner of his Death :
Yet I'm a Stranger in the Court of *Pyrrhus* ;
Scarce have I set my Foot within *Epirus*,
When you enjoin me to destroy the Prince.
It shall be done this very Night.

Herm. But now,
This very Hour he weds *Andromache* ;
The Temple shines with pomp ; the golden Throne
Is now prepared ; the joyful Rites begin ;
My Shame is publick——oh be speedy Prince !
My wrath's Impatient——*Pyrrhus* lives too long !
Intent on Love and heedless of his Person,
He covers with his Guards the *Trojan* Boy.
Now is the Time ; assemble all your *Greeks* :
Mine shall assist them ; let their Fury loose :
Already they regard him as a Foe.

Be gone *Orestes*—kill the faithless Tyrant !
My Love shall recompence the glorious Deed.

Orest. Consider, Madam—

Herm. You but mock my Rage !

I was contriving how to make you happy.

Think you to merit by your idle Sighs ;

And not attest your Love by one brave Action ?

Go ! with your boasted Constancy ! and leave

Hermione to execute her own Revenge !

I blush to think how my too easie Faith

Has twice been baffled in one shameful Hour !

Orest. Hear me but speak !—you know I'll dye to serve
you !

Herm. I'll go my self: I'll stab him at the Altar:

Then drive the Poignard, reeking with his Blood,

Through my own Heart. In Death we shall unite:

Better to dye with him, than live with you !

Orest. That were to make him blest ; and me more
wretched :

Madam, he dyes by me !—Have you a Foe,

And shall I let him live ?—My Rival too ?

Ere yon Meridian Son declines, he dyes :

And you shall say, that I deserve your Love.

Herm. Go Prince ; strike home ! And leave the rest to me.
Let all your Ships stand ready for our Flight.

SCENE IV.

Hermione, Cleone.

Cle. Madam, you'll perish in this bold Attempt.

Herm. Give me my Vengeance, I am content to perish.

I was to blame to trust it with another :

In my own Hands it had been more secure.

Orestes hates not *Pyrrhus*, as I hate him :

I should have thrust the Dagger home ; have seen

The Tyrant curse me with his parting Breath,

And roll about his dying Eyes in vain,

To

To find *Andromache*, whom I would hide.
 Oh, would *Orestes*, when he gives the Blow,
 Tell him he dyes my Victim! — haste *Cleone*;
 Charge him to say, *Hermione's* Resentments,
 Not those of *Greece*, have sentenced him to Death.
 Haste my *Cleone*! My Revenge is lost,
 If *Pyrrhus* knows not that he dyes by me!

Cle. I shall obey your Orders, Madam — But I see
 The King! — Who could expect him here!

Herm. Oh, fly! *Cleone*, fly! and bid *Orestes*
 Not to proceed a Step before I see him.

S C E N E. V.

Hermione, Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd Princess:
 Your distant Looks reproach me; and I come
 Not to defend, but to avow my Guilt.
Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own Injustice;
 Nor form Excuses, while his Heart condemns him.
 I might perhaps alledge our warlike Sires,
 Unknown to us, engaged us to each other;
 And joyn'd our Hearts by Contract, not by Love.
 But I detest such Cobweb Arts: I own
 My Father's Treaty, and allow it's Force.
 I sent Ambassadors to call you hither;
 Receiv'd you as my Queen; and hoped my Oaths,
 So oft renew'd, might ripen into Love.
 The Gods can witness, Madam, how I fought
 Against *Andromache's* too fatal Charms!
 And still I wish I had the Power to leave
 This *Trojan* Beauty, and be just to you.
 Discharge your Anger on this perjur'd Man!
 For I abhor my Crime! and should be pleas'd
 To hear you speak your Wrongs aloud: No Terms,

The Distrest Mother.

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No Bitterness of Wrath, nor keen Reproach,
Will equal Half the Upbraidings of my Heart.

Herm. I find, Sir, you can be sincere: You scorn
To act your Crimes with Fear like other Men.

A Hero should be bold; above all Laws;
He bravely false; and laugh at solemn Ties.

To be perfidious shews a daring Mind:
And you have nobly triumphed o'er a Maid!

To court me; to reject me; to return;
Then to forsake me for a *Phrygian* Slave:

To lay proud *Troy* in Ashes; then to raise
The Son of *Hector*, and renounce the *Greeks*:

Are Actions worthy the great Soul of *Pyrrhus*.

Pyr. Madam, go on: give your Resentments Birth;
And pour forth all your Indignation on me.

Herm. 'T would please your Queen, should I upbraid your
falsehood;

all you-perfidious, Traitor, all the Names
That injured Virgins lavish on your Sex;

Should o'erflow with Tears, and dye with Grief,
And furnish out a Tale to sooth her Pride:

But, Sir, I would not over-charge her Joys.
If you would charm *Andromache*, recount

your bloody Battles, your Exploits, your Slaughters,
your great Atcheivements in her Father's Palace:

She needs must love the Man, who fought so bravely,
And in her Sight slew Half her Royal Kindred.

Pyr. With Horror I look back on my past Deeds!
To punish'd *Helen's* Wrongs too far; I shed

so much of Blood; But, Madam, *Helen's* Daughter
could not object those Ills the Mother caused.

However, I am pleas'd to find you hate me:
I was too forward to accuse my self:

The Man who ne'er was loved, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a Father brought you hither;

And I stood bound by Promise to receive you:
If our Desires were different Ways inclined;

G

And

And you, I own, were not obliged to love me.

Herm. Have I not loved you then ! perfidious Man !
 For you I slighted all the *Grecian* Princes ;
 Forsook my Father's House ; conceal'd my Wrongs,
 When most provoked ; would not return to *Sparta* :
 In hopes, that Time might fix your wavering Heart.
 I loved you, when inconstant : and even now,
 Inhumane King, that you pronounce my Death,
 My Heart still doubts, if I should love, or hate you.
 But, Oh, since you resolve to wed another,
 Defer your cruel purpose till to Morrow !
 That I may not be here to grace her Triumph :
 This is the last Request, I e'er shall make you. —
 See, if the barbarous Prince vouchsafes an Answer !
 Go, then, to the loved *Phrygian* ; hence ! be gone !
 And bear to her those Vows, that once were mine :
 Go in Defiance to the avenging Gods !
 Be gone ! The Priest expects you at the Altar —
 But Tyrant, have a Care I come not thither.

S C E N E VI.

Pyrrhus, Phoenix.

Phan. Sir, did you mind her Threats ? your Life's in
 Danger :

There is no trifling with a Woman's Rage.
 The *Greeks*, that swarm about the Court, all hate you ;
 Will treat you as their Country's Enemy,
 And joyn in her Revenge : Besides, *Orestes*
 Still Loves her to Distraction : Sir, I beg —

Pyr. How ! *Phoenix* : — should I fear a Woman's
 Threats ?

A nobler Passion takes up all my Thought :
 I must prepare to meet *Andromache*.
 Do thou place all my Guards about her Son :
 If he be safe, *Pyrrhus* is free from Fear.

S C E N E

S C E N E VII.

Phoenix, alone.

Oh *Pyrrhus*! Oh, what Pity 'tis, the Gods,
Who fill'd thy Soul with every kingly Virtue,
Formed thee for Empire and consummate Greatness,
Should leave thee so exposed to wild Desires,
That hurry thee beyond the Bounds of Reason!
Such was *Achilles*: Generous, fierce, and brave;
Open, and undesigning: But impatient.
Indisciplin'd, and not to be controul'd.
Fear this Whirl of Passion, this Career,
That over-bears Reflection and cool Thought.
Tremble for the Event! — But see, the Queen,
Magnificent in royal Pride, appears.
Must obey, and guard her Son from Danger.

S C E N E VIII.

Andromache, *Cephisa*.

Ceph. Madam, once more you look and move a Queen!
Your Sorrows are dispersed; your Charms revive,
And every faded Beauty blooms anew.

Andr. Yet all is not as I could wish *Cephisa*.

Ceph. You see the King is watchful o'er your Son;
Dicks him with princely Robes, with Guards surrounds him:
Astyanax begins to reign already.

Andr. *Pyrrhus* is nobly minded; and I fain
Should live to thank him for *Astyanax*:

'Tis a vain Thought — However, since my Child
Has such a Friend, I ought not to repine.

Ceph. These dark Unfoldings of your Soul perplex me:
What meant those Floods of Tears, those warm Embraces,
As if you bid your Son Adieu for ever?
For Heaven's Sake, Madam, let me know your Griefs!
If you distrust my Faith—

Andr. That were to wrong thee.
Oh, my *Cephisa*! This gay borrowed Air,
This Blaze of Jewels, and this bridal Dress,
Are but mock-Trappings to conceal my Woe:
My Heart still mourns; I still am *Hector's* Widow.

Ceph. Will you then break the Promise given to *Pyrrhus*;
Blow up his Rage afresh, and blast your Hopes?

Andr. I thought, *Cephisa*, thou had'st known thy Mistress!
Could'st thou believe I would be false to *Hector*?
Fall off from such a Husband! Break his Rest,
And call him to this hated Light again,
To see *Andromache* in *Pyrrhus* Arms!
Would *Hector*, were he living and I dead,
Forget *Andromache*, and wed her Foe?

Ceph. I cannot guess what Drift your Thoughts pursue:
But, oh, I fear there's something dreadful in it!
Must then *Astyanax* be doomed to dye;
And you to linger out a Life in Bondage?

Andr. Nor this, nor that, *Cephisa*, will I bear:
My Word is past to *Pyrrhus*, his to me;
And I rely upon his promis'd Faith.
Unequal as he is, I know him well:
Pyrrhus is violent; but he is sincere,
And will perform beyond what he has sworn:
The *Greeks* will but incense him more; their Rage
Will make him cherish *Hector's* Son.

Ceph. Ah, Madam!
Explain these Riddles to my boading Heart!

Andr. Thou may'st remember, for thou oft hast heard me
Relate the dreadful Vision, which I saw,
When first I landed Captive in *Epirus*.
That very Night, as in a Dream I lay,

A ghastly

The Distrest Mother.

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A ghastly Figure, full of gaping Wounds,
His Eyes a-glare, his Hair all stiff with Blood,
Full in my Sight thrice shook his Head and groaned.
I soon discern'd my slaughter'd *Hector's* Shade;
But, oh, how changed! Ye Gods, how much unlike
The living *Hector*!——Loud he bid me fly!
Fly from *Achilles* Son! Then sternly frown'd,
And disappear'd: Struck with the dreadful Sound,
I started and awaked.

Ceph. But did he bid you
Destroy *Astyanax*?

Andr. *Cephisa*, I'll preserve him;
With my own Life, *Cephisa*, I'll preserve him.

Ceph. What may these Words, so full of Horrour, mean?

Andr. Know then the secret Purpose of my Soul:

Andromache will not be false to *Pyrrhus*;

Nor violate her sacred Love to *Hector*.

This Hour I'll meet the King; the holy Priest

shall joyn us, and confirm our mutual Vows.

This will secure a Father to my Child.

That done, I have no farther Use for Life:

This pointed Dagger, this determin'd Hand,
shall save my Virtue, and conclude my Woes.

Ceph. Ah, Madam! Recollect your scatter'd Reason!
This fell Dispair ill suits your present Fortunes.

Andr. No other Stratagem can serve my Purpose:

This is the sole Expedient, to be just

To *Hector*, to *Astyanax*, to *Pyrrhus*.

Soon shall visit *Hector*, and the Shades

Of my great Ancestors——*Cephisa*, thou

Wilt lend a Hand to close thy Mistress Eyes.

Ceph. Oh, never think, that I will stay behind you!

Andr. No, my *Cephisa*, I must have thee live.

Remember thou did'st promise to obey,

and to be secret: Wilt thou now betray me?

After thy long, thy faithful Service, wilt thou

refuse my last Commands, my dying Wish?

Once

Once more, I do conjure thee, live for me!

Ceph. Life is not worth my Care, when you are gone.

Andr. I must commit into thy faithful Hands,
All that is dear and precious to my Soul:
Live, and supply my Absence to my Child.
All that remains of *Troy*; a future Progeny
Of Heroes; and a distant Line of Kings,
In him, is all intrusted to thy Care.

Ceph. But, Madam, what will be the Rage of *Pyrrhus*,
Defrauded of his promis'd Happiness?

Andr. That will require thy utmost Skill: Observe
The first impetuous Onsets of his Grief:
Use every Artifice to keep him stedfast.
Sometimes with Tears thou may'st discourse of me:
Speak of our Marriage: Let him think I loved him.
Tell him my Soul repos'd it self on him,
When I resign'd my Son to his Protection.

Ceph. Oh, for a Spirit to support my Grief!
Is there ought more, before you go for ever?

Andr. Oh my *Cephisa*! my swollen Heart is full!
I have a thousand Farewells to my Son:—
But Tears break in—Grief interrupts my Speech—
My Soul o'erflows in Fondness!—Let him know,
I dy'd to save him:—And would dye again.
Season his Mind with early Hints of Glory:
Make him acquainted with his Ancestors;
Trace out their shining Story in his Thoughts:
Dwell on the Exploits of his immortal Father;
And sometimes let him hear his Mother's Name.
Let him reflect upon his Royal Birth
With modest Pride: *Pyrrhus* will prove a Friend;
But let him know, he has a Conquerour's Right.
He must be taught to stifle his Resentments,
And sacrifice his Vengeance to his Safety:
Should he prove head-strong, rash, or unadvised,
He then will frustrate all his Mother's Virtue;
Provoke his Fate; and I shall dye in vain.

Ceph. Alas!

The Distrest Mother.

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Ceph. Alas, I fear, I never shall out-live you !

Andr. No more :— Thy Tears, *Cephisa*, will betray me ;
Assume a chearful Look : But still remember— [*Flourish*
Hark, how the Trumpet, with its sprightly Notes, (*within*.
Proclaims the appointed Hour, and calls us hence !

Hector, I come, once more a Queen, to join thee !

Thus the gay Victim, with fresh Garlands crown'd,
Pleased with the sacred Fire's enlivening Sound,
Through gazing Crowds, in solemn State, proceeds ;
And, drest in fatal Pomp, magnificently bleeds.

The End of the Fourth ACT.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Hermione alone.

WHat have I done? where am I? where is *Pyrrhus*?
 Ye Gods! what mean these Horrors?—I am undone!
 My Soul is on the Rack!—I cannot bear it!—
 Why do I wander like some guilty Ghost?
 What brought me to this Place? what keeps me here?
 The Court of *Pyrrhus* has no Room for me!—
 Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?
 Hard-hearted Man! How unconcern'd he left me!
 Did he once sigh? bestow one pitying Look?
 Once shed a Tear? or speak one soft kind Word?
 Did he so much as feign one Moment's Sorrow,
 To calm my Grievs, and mitigate his Falshood?
 —Why am I still thus anxious for his Life?
 Why do I start at his impending Fate?
 Shall he then live; shall the base Traytor live
 To laugh at my Distress? No, let him perish!
 Be quick, *Orestes*!—Execute my Orders!
 Alas! my Orders? Oh preposterous Guilt!
 Can I decree the Death of him I love?
 Was it for this my Soul delighted in him?
 Was it for this I left my Father's Court?
 Have I then cross'd so many Realms and Seas,
 To murder *Pyrrhus*? —

S C E N E

SCENE II.

Hermione, Cleone.

Herm. Oh, *Cleone*, help me!
What have I done? Is *Pyrrhus* yet alive?
What say'st thou?— Answer me! Where is the King?

Cle. Madam, I saw the cruel Prince set forward,
Triumphant in his Looks, and full of Joy.
Still, as he walk'd, his ravish'd Eyes were fixt
On the fair Captive; while through shouting Crowds
She pass'd along with a dejected Air,
And seem'd to mourn her *Hector* to the last.

Herm. Insulting Tyrant! I shall burst with Rage!—
But say, *Cleone*, didst thou mark him well?
Was his Brow smooth? Say, did there not appear
Some Shade of Grief? some little Cloud of Sorrow?
Did he not stop? did he not once look back?
Didst thou approach him? Was he not confounded?
Did he not — Oh, be quick! and tell me all!

Cle. Madam, the Tumult of his Joy admits
No Thought, but Love. Unguarded he marched on
'Midst a promiscuous Throng of Friends and Foes.
His Cares all turn upon *Astyanax*,
Whom he has lodged within the Cittadel,
Defended by the Strength of all his Guards.

Herm. Enough!—he dyes!—the Traytor!—where's *Orestes*?

Cle. He is in the Temple, with his whole Retinue.

Herm. Is he still resolute? is he determin'd?

Cle. Madam, I fear—

Herm. How! — Is *Orestes* false?
Does he betray me too!

Cle. A thousand Doubts
Perplex his Soul, and wound him with Remorse:

H

His

His Virtue and his Love prevail by Turns.
 He told me *Pyrrhus* should not fall ignobly;
Pyrrhus the warlike Son of great *Achilles*.
 He dreads the Censure of the *Grecian* States;
 Of all Mankind: And fears to stain his Honour.

Herm. Poor, timorous Wretch! 'tis false! he basely fears
 To cope with Dangers, and encounter Death:—

'Tis that he fears! —Am I bright *Helen's* Daughter?

To vindicate her Wrongs all *Greece* conspired;
 For Her Confederate Nations fought, and Kings were slain;
Troy was o'er-thrown, and a whole Empire fell.

My Eyes want Force to raise a Lover's Arm
 Against a Tyrant, that has dared to wrong me.

Cle. Madam, like *Helen*, trust your Cause to *Greece*.

Herm. No! I'll avenge my self! I'll to the Temple;
 I'll over-turn the Altar; stab the Priest!
 I'll hurl Destruction like a Whirlwind round me!
 They must not wed! they must not live! they shall not!
 Let me be gone! I have no Time to lose!
 Stand off! with-hold me not! I am all Distraction!
 Oh *Pyrrhus*! Tyrant! Traitor! Thou shalt bleed!

SCENE III.

Hermione, Cleone, Orestes.

Orest. Madam, 'tis done: Your Orders are obeyed;
 The Tyrant lies expiring at the Altar.

Herm. Is *Pyrrhus* slain?—

Orest. Even now he gasps in Death.
 Our *Greeks*, all undistinguish'd in the Crowd,
 Flock'd to the Temple, and dispers'd themselves
 On every side the Altar:—I was there;
Pyrrhus observed me, with a haughty Eye;
 And, proud to triumph over *Greece* in me,
 From his own Brows he took the Diadem,

And

The Distress'd Mother.

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And bound it on the Temples of his Captive.
Receive, said he, my Crown ; receive my Faith ;
Mine and my People's Sovereign reign for ever.
From this blest Hour, a Father to your Son,
I'll scourge his Foes : Hence-forward be he stiled
The *Trojan* King. I swear it at the Altar ;
And call the Gods to ratify my Vows.
His Subjects with loud Acclamations shook
The spacious Dome ! Our *Greeks*, enraged, cry'd out
Revenge ! Revenge ! broke through the thronging Press ;
And rush'd tumultuous on the unguarded King.
Their eager Fury left no Work for me.

Pyrrhus a while oppos'd their clashing Swords,
And dealt his fatal Blows on every side,
With Manly Fierceness ; till oppress'd by Numbers,
Streaming with Blood, all over gashed with Wounds,
He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the Altar fell.

Haste, Madam ; let us fly ! haste to our Ships !
They stand unmoored : Our Friends attend us there.

Herm. What have they done !

Orest. Madam, forgive their Rage.

Own your Vengeance had been more compleat,
Had *Pyrrhus* fallen by me ; and had he known,
Hermione chastis'd him by my Arm.

Herm. Peace, Monster, Peace ! — Go tell thy horrid Tale
To Savages, and howl it out in Desarts.

Would'st thou impute to me thy barbarous Guilt ?

Would'st thou make the Accomplice of thy Crimes ?

Hence, to thy *Greeks* ! and boast thy foul Exploits !

My Soul abhors them ! I disclaim the Deed !

He gone ! I know thee not ! Thou fell Barbarian !

What had he done ? What could provoke thy Madness

To assassinate so great, so brave a Man !

Who set thee on ?

Orest. Grant me Patience, Heaven !

With your own Lips did you not curse the Tyrant,
Pronounce his Death, and urge me to destroy him ?

H 2

Herm. What

Herm. What if, transported by my boundless Passion,
I could not bear to see him wed another?

Were you to obey a jealous Woman's Phrenzy?
You should have dived into my inmost Thoughts:
My Heart, though full of Rage, was free from Malice;
And all my Anger was Excess of Love.

Why did you take me at my Word? You saw
The Struggles of my Soul; you heard me rave.
You should have question'd me a Thousand Times;
Yet still have doubted, and still question'd on,
Before you ventured on a Life so precious.

Orest. Hear me but speak:—Heaven knows, against my Will.

Herm. Why did you not return? Why not consult me
A Second time? And, undetermin'd still,
Again return, and still find new Delays.
What had your rash, officious *Greeks*, dire Blood-Hounds,
To do with my Revenge? What drew you hither,
To bring on me the vengeful Woes that haunt you?
Are these the Fruits of your detested Love?
Your fatal Embassy, your hateful Presence,
Drove *Pyrrhus* to my Rival; and destroys
Both him and me:—He might have loved me still,
Had you ne'er interposed.——Avant! Be gone!
And leave me in *Epirus*.——I renounce
My Friends, my Country, *Greece*, and all Mankind:
But chiefly I renounce Thee! Monster, Thee!

SCENE IV.

Orestes.

Am I awake? where am I! soft, my Soul:
Be not too rash.——Was that *Hermione*?
Why should her Anger thunder against me?
Was not this Blood-shed all by her Command?
I am, indeed, a most outrageous Monster!

Ruffian, Murderer, a base Assassin!
 And all to please a false ungrateful Woman.
 Henceforward let the Laws of Nations cease;
 And let the Pale, that severs Right and Wrong;
 Things Sacred and Prophane, be broken down:
 Gods in their Temples, Kings upon their Throne,
 Be not in safety, while *Orestes* lives.
 Oh, never more shall my torn Mind be healed,
 Nor taste the gentle Comforts of Repose!
 A dreadful Band of gloomy Cares surround me,
 And lay strong Siege to my distracted Soul.

S C E N E V.

Orestes, Pylades, attended by Greeks.

Pyl. Haste, Prince; let us be gone: 'Tis Death to stay.

Andromache Reigns Queen: She gives the Alarm,
 And vows Revenge upon the Foes of *Pyrrhus*.

The People arm and muster in the Streets:

Our *Greeks* will not be able long to guard
 The Palace Gates, and to secure our Flight.

We must be speedy, Sir.

Orest. You may depart,

My Friends:—*Hermione* and I remain.——

Her Cruelty has quite undone me!——Go,

And leave me to my self.—I'll find her out.

Pyl. Alas, unhappy Princess!—She is no more.

Forget her, Sir, and save your self with us.

Orest. *Hermione* no more!—O all ye Powers!

Pyl. Full of Disorder, Wildness in her Looks,

With Hands expanded, and dishevelled Hair,

Breathless and pale, with Shrieks she sought the Temple.

In the mid-way she met the Corpse of *Pyrrhus*:

She startled at the Sight: Then, stiff with Horrour,

Amazed frightful! Wakened from the dire Amaze,

She

She raised her Eyes to Heaven with such a Look,
As spoke her Sorrows, and reproach'd the Gods:
Then plunged a Poignard deep within her Breast,
And fell on *Pyrrhus*, grasping him in Death.

Orest. I thank you, Gods! — I never could expect
To be so Wretched! — You have been industrious
To finish your Decrees; to make *Orestes*
A dreadful Instance of your Power to Punish.
I am singled out to bear the Wrath of Heaven.

Pyl. You hazzard your Retreat by these Delays.
The Guards will soon beset us. Your Complaints
Are vain, and may be Fatal.

Orest. True, my Friend:
And therefore 'twas I thank'd the bounteous Gods.
My Fate's accomplish'd! — I shall dye Content.
Oh bear me hence! — Blow, Winds! —

Pyl. Let us be gone.

Orest. The murdered Lovers wait me. — Hark! They
call!

Nay, if your Blood still reeks, I'll mingle mine.
One Tomb will hold us all.

Pyl. Alas! I fear

His Ravings will return with his Misfortunes.

Orest. I am dizzy! — Clouds! — Quite lost in utter Dark-
ness!

Guide me, some friendly Pilot, through the Storm.
I shiver! — Oh, I freeze! — So: — Light returns:
'Tis the grey Dawn. — See, *Pylades*! Behold! —
I am encompass'd with a Sea of Blood! —

The crimson Billows! — Oh! My Brain's on Fire!

Pyl. How is it, Sir? — Repose your self on me.

Orest. *Pyrrhus*, stand off! — What would'st thou?
How he glares!

What envious Hand has clos'd thy Wounds? — Have
thee.

It is *Hermione* that strikes. — Confusion!
She catches *Pyrrhus* in her Arms. — Oh, save me!

terrible she looks!—She knits her Brow!
 owns me Dead: She frights me into Madness!
 am I?—Who are you?—
 Alas, poor Prince!
 support him.—How he pants for Breath!
 This is most kind, my *Pylades*.—Oh, why,
 as I born to give thee endless Trouble?
 All will go well: He settles into Reason.
 Who talks of Reason?—Better to have none,
 ot enough.—Run, some one, tell my *Greeks*,
 ot have them touch the King.—Now!—Now!
 again!—See there!—Look where they come!
 of Furies!—How they swarm about me!
 rour!—Hide me!—Oh their snaky Locks!
 How they hiss!—See! See their flaming Brands!
 ey let drive full at me!—How they grin,
 ke their iron Whips!—My Ears! What yelling!
Hermione!—She sets them on!—
 ot your Scorpions thus into my Bosom!
 —I am stung to Death!—Dispatch me soon!
 —Take my Heart, *Hermione*!—Tear it out!
 me!—Kill me!—Oh, my tortured Soul!—
 Kind Heaven restore him to his wonted Calm!
 I seen him Rave: But never thus:
 ent!—Assist me Friends, to bear him off.
 e is short: should his strong Rage return,
 be beyond our Power to force him hence.
 ny Friends!—I hear the Portal open.

S C E N E VI.

Phoenix, attended by Guards.

a Man!—*Orestes* is not here!—
 ant Villains!—The base, giddy Rabble,
 ands should all have have been employed with
 To

To waste the Fleet, flocked round the dying Princess;
 And, while they stand agaze, the *Greeks* embark.
 Oh, 'tis too plain! — This Sacrilegious Murder
 Was authoris'd. — The Ambassadour's Escape
 Declares his Guilt. — Most bloody Embassy!
 Most unexampled Deed! — Where, where, ye Gods,
 Is Majesty secure, if in your Temples
 You give it no Protection! — See; the Queen.

S C E N E VII.

Phoenix, Andromache, Cephisa, *with Attendants.*

Andr. Yes, ye inhumane *Greeks*! The Time will come
 When you shall dearly pay your bloody Deeds!
 How should the *Trojans* hope for Mercy from you,
 When thus you turn your impious Rage on *Pyrrhus*;
Pyrrhus the bravest Man in all your League;
 The Man, whose single Valour made you Triumpher.
 Is my Child there? —

Ceph. It is the Corpse of *Pyrrhus*.
 The weeping Souldiers bear him on their Shields.

Andr. Ill-fated Prince! Too negligent of Life!
 And too unwary of the faithless *Greeks*!
 Cut off in the fresh ripening Prime of Manhood,
 Even in the Pride of Life; thy Triumphs new,
 And all thy Glories in full Blossom round thee!
 The very *Trojans* would bewail thy Fate.

Ceph. Alas, then will your Sorrows never End!

Andr. Oh, never! never — While I live, my Tears
 Will never cease; for I was Born to Grieve. —
 Give present Orders for the Funeral Poms: [To
 Let him be robed in all his Regal State;
 Place round him every shining mark of Honour;
 And let the Pile, that Consecrates his Ashes,
 Rise like his Fame, and blaze above the Clouds.

S C E N E VIII.

Andromache, Cephisa, with Attendants.

Ceph. That Sound proclaims the Arrival of the Prince:
The Guards conduct him from the Cittadel.

Andr. With open Arms I'll meet him! — Oh, *Cephisa*!
springing Joy, mixt with a soft Concern,
Pleasure, which no Language can Express,
in Extasie, that Mothers only feel,
lays round my Heart, and brightens up my Sorrow,
like Gleams of Sun-shine in a louring Skie.

Though plunged in Ills, and exercised in Care,
yet never let the noble Mind despair.

When prest by Dangers, and beset with Foes,

The Gods their timely Succour interpose;

and when our Vertue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with Grief,
by unforeseen Expedients bring Relieif.

The End of the last A C T.

— I —

Epilogue:

EPILOGUE

Written by Mr. Budgell of the Inner-
Temple.

Spoken by Mrs. Oldfield.

I Hope you'll own that with becoming Art
I've play'd my Game, and topp'd the Widow's Part;
My Spouse, poor Man! could not live out the Play,
But dy'd commodiously on Wedding-Day,
While I his Relict made at one bold Fling
Myself a Princess, and young Sty a King.

You Ladies who protract a Lover's Pain,
And hear your Servants sigh whole Tears in vain;
Which of you all would not on Marriage venture,
Might she so soon upon her Jointure enter?

'Twas a strange Scape! had Pyrrhus liv'd till now
I had been finely hamper'd in my Vow.
To dye by ones own Hand, and fly the Charms
Of Love and Life in a young Monarch's Arms!
'Twere an hard Fate——e'er I had undergone it
I might have took one Night——to think upon it.

But why you'll say was all this Grief exprest
For a first Husband, laid long since at Rest?
Why so much Coldness to my kind Protector?
——Ah Ladies! had you known the good Man Hector!

mer will tell you (or I'me misinform'd)
at when enrag'd the Grecian Camp he Storm'd,
break the ten-fold Barriers of the Gate
threw a Stone of such prodigious Weight
no two Men could lift; not even of those
in that Age of thund'ring Mortals rose:
It would have sprain'd a Dozen modern Beaux.
length howe'er I laid my Weeds aside,
sunk the Widow in the well-dress'd Bride.
it still remains to grace the Play,
bless with Joy my Coronation Day:
then, ye Circles of the Brave and Fair,
Fatherless and Widow to your Care.

F I N I S.

thence will tell you (or I will write you)
that when enough of the Evening Star
is seen the sea-folk know of the
storm a storm of such magnitude it might
take two days to pass; not even of the
kind in that age of storming clouds.
I would have spent a dozen weeks in
the long house I said my house and
left the Widow in the well-shed I think.
as to his coming to grace the place
right with the my Government Day;
then, the Chief of the House and his
relatives and Widow to your Grace.

F I N I S